

REMARKS

Receipt of the Office Action of June 8, 2009 is gratefully acknowledged.

Claims 18 - 34 have been examined. These have been rejected as follows: claims 18 and 28 - 30 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as the "structure of the interface" is not clear; claims 18 - 34 under 35 USC 102(b) by Zetter; and claims 18 - 31 and 34 under 35 USC 102(b) by Meinema.

Regarding the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, it is noted that claim 18 does not recite the "interface." Claim 18 has been cancelled and claims 29 and 30 amended so that the interface is not identified as inductive or galvanic but instead as one which is inductively coupled (claim 29) and one that has galvanic contacts (claim 30). As such, the exact structure of the internal components of the interface are not necessary. Accordingly, claims 29 and 30 are believed to fully comply with the provisions of 35 USC 112.

Moreover, the requirement for details about how specific data are stored appears to be a stretch, since it does not matter how the data are stored. It should be clear that the person skilled in the art knows how to store the data at issue, once he is instructed by the disclosure of the present invention to do so.

As to the art rejections, these are respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 18 is believed to be new and inventive over the prior art, because none of the prior art discloses or suggests a potentiometric sensor which comprises a pH-electrode and a digital data memory permanently connected with a elementary sensor, i.e., a pH-electrode, a microprocessor for control of said digital data memory and a temperature sensor, wherein said digital

data memory stores data pertaining to the conditions experienced by the pH-sensor, for example the extreme values of the operating pH or the extreme values of the operating temperature and historical data over a moving time-interval of sensor operation, and/or event-dependent historical data. However, these parameters are of vital interest for estimating the remaining service life of the potentiometric sensor. Thus, the potentiometric sensor as claimed in claim 18 provides a significant advantage over the prior art. Since this advantageous combination of features is not suggested by the prior art, the subject matter of new claim 18 should be considered inventive.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and re-examination are respectfully requested and claims 18, 24 - 27, 29 and 30 found allowable

Respectfully submitted,
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